DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 432 532 SO 031 126

AUTHOR Patrick, John J.

TITLE The Concept of Citizenship in Education for Democracy. ERIC Digest.

INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, Bloomington, IN.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO EDO-SO-1999-6
PUB DATE 1999-08-00
NOTE 4p.
CONTRACT ED-99-CO-0016
AVAILABLE FROM ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, 2805 East Tenth Street, Suite 120, Bloomington, IN 47408; Tel: 800-266-3815 (Toll Free).
PUB TYPE ERIC Publications (071) -- ERIC Digests in Full Text (073)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Citizenship Education; *Civics; *Democracy; Secondary Education; Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS ERIC Digests

ABSTRACT

The concept of citizenship is at the core of education for democracy. This Digest presents what citizenship is; why citizenship is an essential element of democracy; and how to teach about citizenship in a democracy. In a democracy, the source of all authority (the legitimate basis of all power) is the collective body of the people, the citizens of the polity. A citizen is a full and equal member of a polity. In some states or countries citizenship is based on the place of a person's birth; in other states citizenship is based on the citizenship of one's parents. The single identity possessed equally by all citizens of the polity is civic identity, the freely given commitment to certain civic principles and values of the democracy. Citizenship is the social and legal link between individuals and their democratic political community. The status of citizenship entails responsibilities and duties that must be fulfilled: paying taxes; serving in the military; obeying laws; loyalty and commitment to the state; and improving the quality of political and civic life. Students involved in education for democracy need to know what citizenship is; how it is acquired or lost; what rights, responsibilities, and duties are entailed by it; and how it is connected to the institutions of particular nation-states, including their own. Students also need to develop the participatory skills of interacting, monitoring, and influencing. These skills can be developed through (1) student participation in democratically conducted student organizations; (2) school-based community service that is connected to the school's curriculum; and (3) cooperative learning activities which pursue a common goal. The "We the People...Project Citizen" program develops these skills. (JH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 432 532

The Concept of Citizenship in Education for Democracy. ERIC Digest

by John J. Patrick

SO 031 126

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ERIC Digest
Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Social Science Education

2805 EAST TENTH STREET • SUITE 120
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47408
812-855-3838 • 800-266-3815

EDO-SO-1999-6

August 1999

The Concept of Citizenship in Education for Democracy

By John J. Patrick

The concept of citizenship is at the core of education for democracy. This Digest discusses (1) what citizenship is; (2) why citizenship is an essential element of democracy; and (3) how to teach about citizenship in a democracy.

The Meaning of Citizenship. In a democracy, the source of all authority—the legitimate basis of all power—is the collective body of the people, the citizens of the polity. There is popular sovereignty of the citizens and thereby government by consent of the governed. A citizen is a full and equal member of a polity, such as a democratic nation-state (Mouffe 1995, 217).

In some states or countries, citizenship, the condition of being a citizen, is based on the place of a person's birth, which is known as *jus soli* citizenship. In other places, the status of citizen is based on the citizenship of one's parents, which is known as *jus sanguinis* citizenship. Some countries use both bases for ascribing citizenship. Further, most democratic states have established legal procedures by which people without a birthright to citizenship can become naturalized citizens.

Equality before the law is one fundamental right of the citizen; other examples are such political rights as voting and participating in public interest groups. Constitutions may make a distinction between the rights of citizens and of inhabitants of the political community who are not citizens. For example, in the United States of America, only citizens have the right to vote, serve on juries, and be elected to certain offices of the government, such as Congress. All other rights in the United States Constitution are guaranteed to everyone residing in the country, citizens and noncitizens alike.

The people of a democratic country or nation-state may have various and overlapping identities based on such factors of society as religion, race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. However, the single identity possessed equally by all citizens of the polity, regardless of differences, is civic identity. Held in common by all citizens, civic identity is based on freely given commitment to certain civic principles and values of the democracy. In countries with widespread diversity in religious, racial, and ethnic identities (e.g., the USA, Canada, and Australia), a common and overarching civic identity is the tie that holds citizens together in a single democratic political order.

Why Citizenship Is an Essential Element of a Democracy. Citizenship is the social and legal link between individuals and their democratic political community. And the status of citizenship entails very important responsibilities and duties that must be fulfilled; if they are not, democracy is disabled. The duties of responsible citizenship include paying taxes, serving in the country's armed forces when called upon, obeying laws enacted by one's representatives in government, demonstrating commitment and loyalty to the democratic political community and state, constructively criticizing the conditions of political and civic life, and participating to improve the quality of political and civic life. The responsibilities of citizenship also involve action to narrow the gap between ideals and realities. For instance, the highest standards for good government in a constitutional liberal democracy are (1) equal security for the rights of all persons in the polity, and (2) government by consent of the governed. Citizens have the responsibility to recognize and overcome contradictions of ideals concerning equality of rights for all citizens, such as unjust denial to certain persons or groups of their rights to participate in government or to fair treatment in the courts of law (Galston 1995, 48).

If citizens of a democracy would have security for their rights, they must take responsibility for them. First, they must respect the rights of others. Second, they must act to defend their own rights and the rights of others against those who would abuse them. And third, they must exercise their rights in order to make democracy work. The rights to vote, to speak freely on public issues, and to participate in voluntary organizations, for example, have little or no significance in political and civic life unless citizens regularly and effectively use them.

At present, democratic nation-states are the only dependable agencies for enforcement of their citizens' rights and for the exercise of their citizens' responsibilities. "Citizenship is the fundamental institution that connects the individual bearer of rights to the protective agencies of the state. The civic realm of the state provides the main channels through which individuals can participate politically and share in governance" (Klusmeyer 1996, 97).

How to Teach about Citizenship in a Democracy. The concept of citizenship is a key to comprehension of what democracy is and how it works. Thus, students involved in education for democracy need to know what citizenship is, how it is acquired or lost in various political systems, what rights, responsibilities, and duties are entailed by it, and how it is connected to the institutions of particular nation-states, especially their own.

But students need to move beyond conceptual understanding to learning experiences that develop participatory skills and civic dispositions for exercising the rights and carrying out the responsibilities and duties of citizenship in a democracy. Three types of participatory skills are interacting, monitoring, and influencing. Interacting pertains to skills of communication and cooperation in political and civic life. Monitoring involves skills needed to track the work of political leaders and institutions of government.

John J. Patrick is Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, Director of the Social Studies Development Center, and a Professor in the Indiana University School of Education.

And influencing refers to skills used to affect outcomes in political and civic life, such as the resolution of public issues. Examples of civic dispositions are such traits of character as civility, sociability, honesty, self-restraint, tolerance, trust, compassion, a sense of duty, a sense of political efficacy, capacity for cooperation, loyalty, courage, respect for the worth and dignity of each person, and concern for the common good (Center for Civic Education 1994; NAEP Civics Consensus Project 1996).

Participatory skills and civic dispositions needed for effective and responsible citizenship in a democracy can be developed through the following kinds of learning experiences (Conrad & Hedin 1991; Niemi & Chapman 1999):

- Student participation in democratically conducted student organizations;
- School-based community service that is connected systematically to the school's curriculum and classroom instruction;
- Cooperative learning activities in which groups of students cooperate to pursue a common goal, such as inquiring about a public issue or responding to a community problem.

A new program that develops participatory skills and civic dispositions of students in the school or local community is *Project Citizen* (Center for Civic Education 1996). Participants in *Project Citizen* cooperate in small groups to identify a significant public issue or problem, conduct research to become informed about it, examine alternative responses put forward to resolve the issue or problem, select an alternative response to the issue as desirable and defend it against interrogators and opponents, and take action with like-minded participants to influence a practical resolution of the issue or problem. Thus, participants in *Project Citizen* learn skills and dispositions that enable them to become constructively engaged in the political and civic life of a democracy. They are on their way to achieving competencies that make democracy work to protect individual rights, to practice government by consent of the governed, and to serve the common good (Tolo 1998).

References and ERIC Resources. The following list of resources includes references used to prepare this Digest. The items followed by an ED number are available in microfiche and/or paper copies from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). For information about prices, contact EDRS, 7420 Fullerton Road, Suite 110, Springfield, Virginia 22153-2852; telephone numbers are (703) 440-1400 and (800) 443-3742. Entries followed by an EJ number, annotated monthly in CURRENT INDEX TO JOURNALS IN EDUCATION (CIJE), are not available through EDRS. However, they can be located in the journal section of most larger libraries by using the bibliographic information provided, requested through Interlibrary Loan, or ordered from commercial reprint services.

Center for Civic Education. NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education, 1994. ED 375 074.

Center for Civic Education. WE THE PEOPLE . . . PROJECT CITIZEN. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education, 1996. ED 405 281.

Conrad, Dan, and Diane Hedin. "School Based Community Service: What We Know From Research and Theory." PHI DELTA KAPPAN 72 (June 1991): 743-749. EJ 426 971.

Galston, William A. "Liberal Virtues and the Formation of Civic Character." In Mary Ann Glendon and David Blankenhorn, Eds. SEEDBEDS OF VIRTUE: SOURCES OF COMPETENCE, CHARACTER, AND CITIZENSHIP IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995.

Klusmeyer, Douglas B. BETWEEN CONSENT AND DESCENT: CONCEPTIONS OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996.

Mouffe, Chantal. "Citizenship." In Seymour Martin Lipset, Ed. ENCYCLOPEDIA OF DEMOCRACY, Volume 1. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1995, 217-221.

NAEP Civics Consensus Project. CIVICS FRAMEWORK FOR THE 1998 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS. Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, 1996. ED 407 355.

Niemi, Richard G., and Chris Chapman. THE CIVIC DEVELOPMENT OF NINTH THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1999.

Tolo, Kenneth W. AN ASSESSMENT OF WE THE PEOPLE . . . PROJECT CITIZEN: PROMOTING CITIZENSHIP IN CLASSROOMS AND COMMUNITIES. Austin: Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, 1998.

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-99-CO-0016. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.